

An Essay on
Rheumatism

Respectfully Submitted to the
Faculty of the

Homoeopathic Medical College
of
Pennsylvania

On the twenty sixth day of January
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by
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Georgia.

fair, distinct, well inked, respects.

Among the various ills to which flesh is heir to, there is one disease, which at the South stands prominent, not for its danger, but for its predominance and the intricacy with which it maintains its grasp when once it obtains a firm hold on the system, the suffering the patient endures and the almost hopelessness of cure under all former modes of treatment —

Rheumatism is one among the many numerous diseases that shows the vast superiority of Homoeopathic over Allopathic treatment, in the mitigation of the pains and shortening the period of its duration — I accordingly have had some experience in treating this disease, although the professional knowledge may not have been what it should

be, or what I would like to have had it,
but still the little that was, produced
results more beneficial than anything
Allopathy had done

I think there is a greater pro-
-alence of Rheumatism in the Southern
Climate than there is here at the north.
The sudden changes and great extremes
from heat to cold here would lead us
to infer different, and that a more
equable and less variable temperature
would be more conducive to health in
this respect. But in the Southern Climate
there is more humidity in the atmosphere.
The summer heat has more of a Satyr-
fying, and its long duration produces
a relaxing and emollient effect on the
System, There is not the burning fiery

feeling that is experienced here on what is called a hot day or in the summer heats generally, It is a rare thing then to see a Case of "Coup de Soliel" although the thermometer ranges as high and the workman is as much exposed to the heat,

This effect I attribute to the peculiar state of the atmosphere, I accordingly think Moisture is one of the principal and exciting cause of all Rheumatic Complaints,

Rheumatism is put down by Authors as of two kinds, Acute and Chronic, but there are varieties that might well be put in Separate Classes, Such as Mercurial Rheumatism, Rheumatism of the head, loins &c which might require Separate and distinct treatment,

Acute Rheumatism is preceded

by a precursory stage, with febrile symptoms
Chilliness, more or less soreness of the joints
in walking, which lasts but a short time
before the symptoms increase in intensity,
the disease becoming fully established and
localizing itself generally in the lower and
larger joints first. The joint, ligaments &
tendons become swollen, inflamed and
very sensitive to the touch, extremely painful
and the least motion increases the sufferings.
There is more or less fever, thirst, high colored
& scanty urine, Constipation, loss of appetite
and aggravation of symptoms at night.
Sometimes bleedings at the nose, or in females
from the uterus, Sometimes profuse sweat
but affording little or no relief, or there may
be delirium or metastases to the brain
heart or lungs. The pain generally

increases in intensity for a few days, then gradually subsides, leaving the parts much swollen, tumefied, and painful on motion. The disease then attacks one or more of the other joints, goes through a similar course of access and decline, and in this way most of the large joints are attacked and cured. One attack of acute Rheumatism generally lasts from two to four weeks—but after the pains and swelling are all cured, and the patient comparatively well, there still remains for a longer or shorter period, a soreness & tenderness of the feet and joints in walking which gradually wears off.

The Cause of Rheumatism, is attributed to Moisture, dampness, or the action of water in some form on the system.

and Especially after becoming fatigued or
over heated, and getting thoroughly wet in a
shower of rain, Constant working in water
or sleeping in wet places or damp shutts
As far as my experience goes, all the Cases
I have seen could be traced to the action
of water in some form

The remedies principally used
for this disease are Acon Bel Bry, Rhus, Pul
Mer. or Ars Ars Cham, Colch, China, Iach Sul
and for threatened Metastasis to the heart
Ars Iach or Acon

It is useless for me to fill up
these pages with Copies of Symptoms
of each remedy from the Materia Medica
or from any of our text books, as it would
labor with no credit to myself or benefit
to any one, but will give one Case I

had last summer and the medicines
I then used. A negro girl was sent
to ^{me} the bloody dysentery, She had had
it about a week, I gave her Mer. Sub which
relieved her in the course of three days -
Two days after she sent for me, I found her
with her left ankle joint much swollen,
hot, tender to the touch very painful, and
with inability to move it, Some fever, Constipation
and no appetite, She said her ankle had
commenced paining her during her attack of
dysentery, I commenced by giving her Acon
and Bry alternately, of the third attenuation
in water, a dose every two hours, the next
day I found her no better, but the symptoms
all rather increased, I continued the Acon
and Bry, for about a week, during the day
she would have intervals of partial relief

but as evening came on the pains grew more
severe, and during the night more extremely
so - and insupportable, about the sixth or
seventh day her left wrist and elbow and
right knee joints became affected, but not
as severe as the first joint attacked, there
occasional delirium especially in the even-
ing and night, she complained of her
leg being numb, dead, wanted it cut off -
wanted to get up and go home - I gave
her more Rhus instead of the Bry, but the
Symptoms still increased, severe head ache
hot dry skin, discharge of blood from the
utero, pain in the right lumbar region
extending round and upwards towards the
base of the Scrobicular Cordis. Chills every other
day, the last of the second and beginning
of the third the disease was at its height

about this time she had two attacks commencing with great pain in her side and bowels some headache, delirium with apparent loss of vision, stupor, and with an appearance of inability to draw her breath, as if there were partial paralysis of the lungs. I was afraid there might be metastasis to the heart, or that the disease was extending there, and gave her Ars. 6th a dose every twenty minutes until her breath gradually became regular. I then gave Bel a few doses half hour apart, which relieved the some head symptoms, and afterwards gave the Rh^{us} and Acon again. I never had seen a case with such some symptoms before and thought at the time, that my patient was in rather a dangerous situation, but under the use of Ars and Bel. the most

Symptoms gradually passed off. In a few days after this she commenced to improve, the pains in the joints grew much less soon, the delirium ceased, urine became more free, the bowels looser, and her appetite returned, and at the end of the fourth week could sit up some but could not walk about until a week after. The first joint attacked was the last to get well. In this case I found Rhus to be more empirical than Bry but still I gave Bry sometimes with the Rhus. For the pains in the head and delirium, I gave Bel. and for the threatened extension to the heart, I gave according to Laurin's direction Ars. In all Cases of inflammatory Rheumatism I have found Acon one of my best remedies, in relieving the pains and checking the inflammation, but in this case

I was disappointed in its use for there was no
cessation, entirely, of pain from the commencement
until the fourth week. There are a great
variety of the acute form, some cases being
very severe and complicated, others with but
few of the bad symptoms, and yielding speedily
to the appropriate remedies. Persons once
attacked with this disease are more liable
to a return than otherwise, but I have known
several persons who had it several years ago
who now had but one attack and who are
now apparently well and hearty.

There are also a great variety of
forms of Chronic Rheumatism, in some the
symptoms are light, in others severe, varying
in their length, in some short & intermittent,
in others long and continuous, and generally
all are more or less affected by the changes

of the matter, The pains are located in the
Muscles, ligaments, and bones. Sometimes
causing Swellings or nodes of the bones or even
softening dissolution & exudation, The Cause
of Chronic Rheumatism, may be from a Continuation
of the acute form, or from a Prolonged
Syphilitic or mercurial diathesis, Sometimes
its course will be for months and months, and
notwithstanding the use of the best selected
medicines, there will be very little if any
appearance of improvement, again other Cases
will be relieved in a few days or weeks, but
still liable to return with any exciting Cause

The remedies in use for Chronic
Rheumatism, are Acon, Bry, Calc, Carveg, Dul Hepar
Iach Mer Phos Rhus Sil Sul Ver,
and for old Cases of long standing Sul, Cal
with aggravations from cold mt-matter, Cal Sul Mer
Dul Iach Rhus Ver

Electro Magnetism is a remedy that I have used with much Satisfaction to myself, and with great relief and benefit to my patients, This may not be in strict accordance with the ideas of all Homoeopaths but my reasons for using it is not from Experiment alone but from the law "Similia" and from Analogy.

A full Charge of Electricity from a powerful Galvanic Battery passed along a nerve for a continuous length of time will paralyze it, A weak Current and at broken intervals passed along a paralyzed nerve, will restore its vitality - A powerful Shock passed through the System will produce pains that may last for days or weeks, and a proper application of Electricity will restore them

I believe that the nervous fluid of

the body is analogous to Electricity and that in certain cases, one of the ultimate causes of disease is the derangement of this nervous force, and that a proper and judicious application of Electricity to such diseased parts will restore the proper action of the nervous force, thereby producing health,

Has there been any positive proof how our attenuated drug acts on disease?

There are theories advanced and put forth to the world, but one theory is just as good as another until a fact is established,

Can any one suppose that the 800, 1000, or 100,000, attenuation acts chemically on the system or the disease which it intends to control?

These attenuations are far beyond the chemical division of matter, and I am almost tempted to say the philosophical division also,

Thou whence do they derive their power & how
do they obtain it, I know of no other
power which a drug can call to its aid
or assimilate with itself by trituration but
Electricity, There is no element known that
produces such a universal and powerful
action,

If the eye has a nerve of
Special Sense by which it sees, the ear by
which it hears, why not the liver have a
peculiar nervous influence by which it secretes
the bile, the kidneys to secrete the urine,
the lacteals to absorb the chyle, the blood
to circulate, new granules to be deposited in
their proper place, effete matter carried
off, and all the different organisms to
carry on their peculiar functions, I ask
why may not all these have a nervous
influence peculiar to themselves, and distinct

disease in its proper tissues, And an attenuated dose of the same drug, restores its proper nervous action, producing the State called Health, Therefore I have taken my authority, both, through "Similia" and analogy, for the use of Electro Magnetism in the removal of pain and the curing of disease, Still I think it acts more Mechanically than Medicinally, and that is, by the removal of obstructions for the passage of the nervous fluid. The object of a Physician is to relieve his patient of Suffering as soon as possible, as well as to Cure the Cause exciting it, The use of means like this I think is both proper as well as expedient, although it may not perform a radical Cure, it will give ease to the patient and allow our medicines to act more beneficially

Now whether Electro Magnetism acts
Mechanically or Inducially, through "Similia"
or analogy, its Capability of removing pains
in Rheumatism cannot be denied. In the
application of Electricity for Rheumatism or
any other disease, it was formerly the practice
to let the patient take hold of both handles
or poles of the battery, or apply the metallic
handles to the diseased parts. In either
Case the electric fluid was not properly
conducted to the parts affected, also the
application of the metal to the skin
produces intense pain and useless suffering.
The proper mode of applying it, is to give
the patient the negative pole to hold in
his hand, or place it under the Coccyx
attached to a wet sponge. the operator
taking the positive pole in one hand

and apply the other to the affected part,
this causes the electricity to pass directly through
the parts wanted to be operated on, in a gentle
manner producing no pain or suffering, but
in most cases relieving the pain promptly
and with much satisfaction to the patient.

In the use of the battery for Rheumatism,
twenty minutes to half an hour, will be a
sufficient length of time for each application
and although, in some cases, the pain may
return after some hours, yet after each appli-
cation, the intervals of return will be longer
apart and the pains less severe. In using
the battery, of course I always gave the
properly indicated Homoeopathic Medicine
I have found the battery more beneficial in
the chronic, than the acute form of disease,
and in cases where Rheumatism has caused

Paralysis of a part, an arm or a hand,
a few applications, will restore its vitality -
The use of the battery is not only of service in
relieving pain, and assisting in the cure of
disease, but it can also be of great service in
diagnosing disease. If there is disease internally
and it is difficult to locate the precise
organ affected, the proper application of
Electricity will point out the precise spot.
If there is a chronic affection a dull pain
will be produced, if an acute, a sharp sticking
pain will be experienced, and by this means,
Every patient, that came to me with the Rheu-
matism, I found their liver more or less
affected. A Subject of such im-
portance as this, Cannot be properly
treated, in the form of a thesis, it
would require more time and paper than

than is usually bestowed on works of this
class, but will say in conclusion, that if
any one wishes to examine into, or take up
the Subject of Electro Magnetism, they will
find in this, as in other Subjects, experience
to be one of our best teachers —